



NEWS RELEASE

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
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Save on Water Bill with Common Sensor

Households use 16 percent less water with free rain shut-off sensor for sprinkler timers – saving 1.4 million gallons!

SANTA BARBARA, CA – October 3, 2011 -- Before the rainy season gets here, get a free rain shut-off sensor for your sprinkler timer. That's been a message from the City of Santa Barbara Water Conservation Program since 2007. Today, there's a new message: We now know that residents can reduce their winter water consumption (and their bills) by an average of 16 percent with a rain shut-off sensor, according to Cathie Paré, Water Resources Specialist.

To calculate the savings, Paré determined the average water use in winter months over the three-year period prior to the rain shut-off sensor installation, and compared that to the average water use of winter months after the installation. Since 2007, over 1.4 million gallons of water has been saved by the 313 water customers who have installed rain shut-off sensors. Larger properties with water meters dedicated to irrigation saved even bigger – 36 percent.

A rain shut-off sensor automatically stops the sprinkler timer from watering during and immediately after a rain event. Depending on the soil and the weather, residents may not need to turn the sprinklers back on for extended periods of time after a soaking rain. Rain shut-off

sensors work best for short off periods. For extended periods, turn sprinkler timer to "off" position.

Additionally, during winter months, homeowners should reduce their watering to a fraction of the summer watering schedule. Most sprinkler timers have a "seasonal adjust" feature which easily allows homeowners to decrease the amount of watering with the seasons. Homeowners or gardeners can visit www.SaveWaterSB.org to see the Weekly Watering Index value, and then type that value into their seasonal adjust feature. This will automatically adjust what percentage of their peak watering schedule to apply during other seasons.

On average, a household with a rain sensor could save more than 4,500 gallons of water over one rainy season. To be one of those households, call the city's Water Conservation Program at 564-5460, schedule a free water checkup and get a free rain shut-off sensor.

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